

The logo features a stylized blue flame or flower icon at the top, flanked by two horizontal lines. Below this, the text "Connecticut Association" is written in a large, blue, serif font, and "of Adult Day Services" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

# Connecticut Association of Adult Day Services

## Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

February 16, 2017

### Regarding the Governor's Budget Proposals Related to Human Services and Aging

**HB 7027, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium ending June 30, 2019**

**Presented by Daniel Belonick, Director of the Adult Day Center at the Alzheimer's Resource Center**

Good evening Sen. Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Representative Ziobron, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Daniel Belonick and I am the Director of Adult Day Services at the Alzheimer's Resource Center in Southington.

I am here this evening to testify on behalf of the Connecticut Association of Adult Day Services, or CAADS, an association of forty-seven adult day centers from across the state of Connecticut. Adult day services are a valuable and cost effective community based service that provides programming, services and respite for hundreds of individuals and families throughout the state.

I am speaking in support of maintaining the funding for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and the statewide Alzheimer's Respite Program. Adult day services are a covered service in the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and are a service utilized by many families on the respite program.

#### **Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders**

We are pleased that the Governor continues to support the state's rebalancing policy for long term services and supports and is proposing to maintain the current level of Medicaid funding for home and community based services. While we realize that the proposed cap on enrollment in the state-funded Level 2 portion of the Home Care Program is not optimal, we are encouraged that the proposal does not reduce the current enrollment capacity. The state's rebalancing policy has provided older adults the right care, at the right time, and in the location of their choice – while saving the state millions of dollars and slowing the increase in Medicaid expenditures for long term care, services and supports. The Governor's proposal recognizes that success and maintains the funding to continue the progress.

Community based providers like adult day centers are meeting the growing needs of Connecticut's older adults and their caregivers while preventing or delaying placements in skilled nursing facilities and helping to prevent the need for more expensive health care settings such as emergency rooms and acute care hospitals. The latest available [annual report](#) of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders indicated that in state fiscal year 2015, \$100,258,596 in net savings were generated as a result of the reduced utilization of nursing facility beds due to the Connecticut Home Care Program. These community based services should be encouraged and we ask for your continued support.

#### **Statewide Alzheimer's Respite Program**

CAADS would like to express our support for the *Statewide Respite Program* within Department on Aging which served 657 elders in 2016. Many elders with dementia live within their own homes for many years with the majority of the caregiving being provided by a spouse, relative, or close friend. It is both the elder and the caregiver who are served by the respite program. Adult day centers provide respite services to

many of these individuals and we see firsthand how the respite program helps family caregivers continue to care for their loved ones at home.

It is unfortunate that the respite program has endured previous cuts, including one last year, and struggles to support the families that so desperately count on it. We want to encourage the Committee to maintain support for this program that is both cost effective to the state and invaluable to family caregivers. Surveys done by program participants show that nearly 90% of them felt the program beneficial to maintaining the client at home. 81% of participants were able to remain in the homes and communities of their choice for the duration of the program year. 89% of participants also found that the program improved the client's quality of life and reduced caregiver stress.

Family caregivers provide countless hours of unpaid long term care, services and supports. They are the true heroes of our long term services and supports system and providing them with needed respite is not only the right thing to do, but it is the prudent thing to do as they save our Medicaid program millions – possibly billions - of dollars every year.

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#### **The Value of Adult Day Services**

We firmly believe adult day center services and other community based services funded by this programs save Connecticut significant long-term care dollars by meeting the growing needs of Connecticut's elderly and their caregivers in the community and preventing unnecessary and premature placements in skilled nursing facilities. The full day of services provided by adult day centers (including door to door transportation) is a struggle to provide on the current rate of \$70.92 a day, yet we are appreciative that this rate was not proposed to be cut.

#### **Adult Day Center Services provided through the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders**

<b>Adult Day Center Services are a <i>full day of care</i></b>
<b>Activities, Companionship, Socialization &amp; Supervision</b>
<b>Medication Administration</b> by licensed Nurses
<b>Nutritious Meals</b> including Breakfast, Hot Lunch, Snacks, and continuous encouragement of liquids
<b>Bathing/Showers</b> are available and personal care is provided
<b>Caregiver Support</b> , Information, and Education are readily available
<b>Escorted Transportation, door to door</b> , is provided to and from the Center
<b>Assistance</b> in Coordinating and Planning client's long term care needs is available
<b>Community Engagement</b> , opportunities for elders to connect with their community through center organized out-trips, programs brought into the centers, philanthropic work, and socialization with other clients, their families, friends and visitors
<b>Opportunities</b> for daily face to face individual consultations, information and referral, support and assistance
<b>Currently reimbursed \$70.92 per day</b>

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

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